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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

National Intelligence Officers

NFAC #4344-80/1
18 June 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

VIA : Deputy Director for National Foreign Assessment
National Intelligence Officer for Warning  25X1

FROM : Assistant National Intelligence Officer for Africa

SUBJECT : Warning Report: Sub-Saharan Africa

1. Action Requested: None; the attached report is for your information.

2. Background: Community representatives and specialists met on 17 June with the A/NIO/AF as chairman. The attached report has not been coordinated with the other participants, but is being circulated to them. If they feel their views have been misinterpreted, or if they have significant additional concerns, I'll report further to you.



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Attachment
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SUBJECT: Warning Report: Sub-Saharan Africa

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NFAC #4344-80

18 June 1980

WARNING REPORT: SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA* No. 20

1. This month's Africa warning meeting was devoted to a discussion of Ethiopia and Somalia. Specifically, concern was focused solely on Ethiopian military responses to continued Somali military actions in the Ogaden.

2. It was the consensus view that Ethiopia will at some point launch a major invasion of Somalia--which it is reportedly planning--but that such a move is not imminent. Given the history of the Ethiopian-Somali dispute over the Ogaden, Ethiopia cannot pacify the area without destroying Somalia's capability to conduct and support military operations in the Ogaden and/or forcing Siad or a successor regime to negotiate a formal renunciation of claims.

3. We continue to believe it is more likely in the near term that Ethiopia will resort to more limited punitive measures against Somalia. These could be launched at any time and include:

a. continuing or stepping up air strikes against guerrilla camps, military bases, or civilian population centers in Somalia;

b. launching brigade-size cross-border operations against Somali guerrilla military camps as part of a "hot pursuit" campaign or as a punitive measure in response to guerrilla activity in the Ogaden. Such attacks would be limited to the border regions and designed for maximum military, psychological and political impact within Somalia;

c. engaging in commando-type operations against Somali political and military officials. This could involve either SSF or Ethiopian personnel; and

d. increasing its efforts, through the anti-Siad Somali Salvation Front, to foment tribal unrest within Somalia. In the Berbera/Hargeisa area, it could step up attempts to capitalize on unhappiness among the Issak with their role in the Siad government, although Ethiopian efforts in this area have had little success so far.

*This memorandum is one of a series produced monthly by NIO/AF. Its purpose is to review possible developments in the short-term future that would be damaging to US interests. Obviously many of these developments will not occur in the time-frame or in the manner suggested, or will not occur at all.

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These limited punitive measures would be low risk operations which would cause problems for the Siad government without directly threatening US forces or facilities should they be established in Somalia. The Ethiopians would not have to consult with the Soviets to undertake operations of this magnitude, and the Soviets would have little influence over decisions to implement them.

4. The Somalis would appeal to the US for support if subjected to even these limited Ethiopian actions. The level of the Somali appeal would be in proportion to US investment of time, money and men.

5. For a major invasion of Somalia--of at least division size and several weeks duration--the Ethiopians would have to consult Moscow in advance since unless Addis Ababa was willing to sacrifice other military operations, such as in Eritrea, a major attack on Somalia would probably require prior Soviet supplies and logistical assistance.

6. It was believed that Moscow would try to deter Ethiopia from launching a major invasion of Somalia because:

a. An Ethiopian invasion seen to have Soviet backing would raise questions of Soviet intentions among Europeans. This would threaten Soviet diplomatic efforts in the post-Afghanistan period.

b. Given the US strength in the Indian Ocean and the US domestic political scene, the Soviets would not be sure of how the US might react and would not want to risk a US military response.

c. It would run the risk of alienating the Arab world and, in particular, the Arab backers of Somalia.

d. They, and probably the Ethiopians, would calculate that the Arab states would substantially increase military aid to the Eritreans and that Sudan would expedite its delivery.

e. For both Ethiopia and the Soviet Union it would risk alienating the OAU.

If the Ethiopians unilaterally launched a major attack on Somalia, the Soviets would find themselves in a dilemma because of the above risks and their investment in Ethiopia. It is expected that they would support Ethiopia, but at the same time try to open a dialogue with the US to settle the issue and avoid a great power confrontation.

7. Some analysts questioned the generally held view that for a major attack on Somalia, Ethiopia would want a 3-to-1 troop advantage and require two months to assemble the invasion force and make the necessary logistical preparations. The 3-to-1 advantage is based on the Soviet model and is

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an overall strength ratio. Since Somalia has "no" air force or air defense capability, Ethiopia would not require a 3-to-1 advantage in troops to have the desired strength ratio. Given 30,000 Ethiopian troops in the northern Ogaden plus the unconfirmed presence of another Ethiopian division there, it follows that Ethiopia would only have to transfer one more division to be prepared for an invasion. They would be facing 20,000 Somali troops plus about 15,000 WSLF guerrillas.

8. We discussed the Soviet reaction to the hypothetical US shooting down Ethiopian MIGs over Berbera. This situation could develop along the following lines:

- a US agreement with Somalia would make the Somalis more belligerent.
- the tempo of the war in the Ogaden would increase.
- the US would position anti-aircraft weapons around its facilities at Berbera.
- the US would engage attacking Ethiopian aircraft.

It was the belief of those present that should this hypothetical situation occur Moscow would tell the Ethiopians to cease their attacks but would replace lost equipment and continue their military supply relationship. The Soviets would make extensive propaganda use of such an incident and that could lead to the Soviets becoming further entrenched in the area.

9. This was only one aspect of our discussion of Soviet reactions to possible events and is included for illustrative purposes. It is beyond the competence of the Africa warning group to assess fully possible Soviet responses, and the A/NIO/AF agreed to solicit the views of Soviet specialists.

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